(c) No, Sir.

(d) These drugs are outside price control. However, high prices charged are being investigated.

Leakage of underground pipeline of NOCIL

4075. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a major disaster was averted recently by fire brigade officials when an underground pipeline belonging to the National Organic Chemicals Industries Limited (NOCIL), carrying NAPTHA gas leaked, and caught fire on the Ghatkopar-Mankhurd link road recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the international Safety norms had been floated while laying the pipeline network; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and what action has been taken|proposed to be taken by Government against NOCIL in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (d) To the extent information is available, a leak in the underground Naptha Pipeline of NOCIL was detected by the company's staff on 3-3-1995. The portion of the pipeline was isolated after pumping of Naptha in the line was stopped. However the leaking naptha caught fire which was contained by the fire brigade personnel and the company's workers and precautions were taken to ensure that the fire does not spread. The residual neptha was burnt in a controlled manner and the minor fire was subsequently extinguished. There were no injuries or casualities. The leak was sealed on the same day.

The company's pipeline is reported to have been installed between 1972 and 1974 as per the international|national safety standards.

Shortage of chemicals and fertilizers

4076. SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATRAMAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to cope with the shortage of chemicals and fertilizers for agriculturists;

(b) the steps taken to bring down the rise in price of fertilizers; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO):(a) to (c) No shortage of agro-chemicals has been reported to this Ministry in the recent past.

As regards fertilizers, w.e.f. 10-6-1994, Urea is the only fertilizer under price, distribution and movement control. The availability of urea in the country during the year 1994-95 was quite satisfactory with reference to the allocations made under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. Temporary and localised shortages experienced during the year were met by rushing supplies from alternative sources. The indigenous production of urea has been optimised and the gap between indigenous availability and demand is being met through imports.

The overall availability of phosphatice and potassic fertilizers has been quite satisfactory with reference to the level of demand obtaining since their decontrol in August, 1992.

The controlled price of urea continues to be heavily subsidised by the Government. The controls on phosphatic and potassic fertilizers were removed w.e.f. 25-8-92. To cushion the impact of the increase in the open market prices of these fertilizers, the scheme of special concessions for decontrolled fertilizers

was extended during the year 1994-95 under which a concession of Rs. 1000/- per tonne was given on sales of Muriate of Potash (MOP) and indigenous Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP). A proportionate concession based on the phosphate and potash contents was also available on indigenous Single Super Phosphate (SSP) and complex grade fertilizers. The special concession scheme for decontrolled fertilizers has also been included in the 1995-96 budget.

Measures have also been taken to reduce the costs of production and transport of decontrolled fertilizers.

Revoking the licensing system

4077. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether licensing system for setting up pharmaceutical industries has been done away with and 51 per cent foreign investment has also been permitted;

(b) if so, the amount of revenue loss likely to be incurred by Govrenment as a result thereof; and

(c) how it is proposed to be compensated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) to (c) Industrial Licensing for all bulk drugs, their intermediates and formulations thereof, except 5 bulk drugs reserved for manufacture in the public sector and bulk drugs produced by the use of recombinant DNA technology as well as those requiring in-vivo use of nucleic acid as the active principles, has been abolished. Foreign investment upto 51 per cent in case of all bulk drugs, their intermediates and formulations thereof (except those produced by the use of recombinant DNA technology) has also been permitted in accordance with the Modifications in the Drug Policy, 1986 announced on September 15, 1994. These modifications do not have any revenue implications.

Production of Nitrogenous Fertilizers

4078. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for the production of nitrogenous fertilizer during April—Dec., 1994 and the achievement of target during this period;

(b) the steps taken by Government to augment this both in the private as well as in the public sector in view of the increasing demand of fertilizers; and

(c) the figures of production in these two sectors State-wise for the period April—Dec., 1994?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) The target for production of nitrogenous fertilizers during the period April—December, 1994 was 59.97 lakh tonnes in terms of nutrients. As against this, the actual production during this period was 58.26 lakh tonnes.

(b) All possible steps were taken to augment production during the above period, in spite of constraints in the availability of natural gas. Additional non-plan support was also given to the two sick companies in the public sector to resume production in some of their units which had earlier suspended production for lack of funds. The actual production of nitrogenous fertilizers during this period was higher by 5.17 lakh tonnes compared to the production in the corresponding period of 1993-94.

(c) The details of state-wise production of nitrogenous fertilizers in the public (including cooperative) and private sectors during April—December, 1994 are given in the statement to this reply.